

**JOURNAL OF THE PROCEEDINGS  
OF THE  
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS  
OF COOK COUNTY**



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**DAVID ORR  
COUNTY CLERK**

**JOURNAL OF THE PROCEEDINGS  
OF THE  
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS  
OF COOK COUNTY**

**OCTOBER 30, 2002  
(SPECIAL MEETING)**



**JOHN H. STROGER, JR., PRESIDENT**

**JERRY BUTLER  
ALLAN C. CARR  
EARLEAN COLLINS  
JOHN P. DALEY  
GREGG GOSLIN  
CARL R. HANSEN  
TED LECHOWICZ  
ROBERTO MALDONADO**

**WILLIAM R. MORAN  
JOSEPH MARIO MORENO  
MIKE QUIGLEY  
HERBERT T. SCHUMANN, JR.  
PETER N. SILVESTRI  
DEBORAH SIMS  
BOBBIE L. STEELE  
CALVIN R. SUTKER**

**DAVID ORR  
COUNTY CLERK**

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**JOURNAL OF THE PROCEEDINGS**

**OF THE**

**BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

**OF COOK COUNTY**

**Meeting of Wednesday, October 30, 2002**

**10:00 A.M.**

**Central Standard Time**

**COOK COUNTY BOARD ROOM, COUNTY BUILDING**

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Board met pursuant to the following call:

October 23, 2002

The Honorable David Orr  
Cook County Clerk  
69 West Washington Street  
Chicago, Illinois 60602

Dear Mr. Orr:

Pursuant to the authority vested in me, I hereby call a Special Meeting of the Board of Commissioners of Cook County for Wednesday, October 30, 2002, at the hour of 10:00 A.M. in the County Board Room, Room 569, County Building, 118 North Clark Street, Chicago, Illinois, at which meeting I will present the Message of the President to the Board of Commissioners submitting the Executive Budget for Fiscal Year 2003.

Yours very truly,

JOHN H. STROGER, JR., President  
Cook County Board of Commissioners

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**COPY OF LETTER SENT TO ALL COMMISSIONERS**

October 23, 2002

Honorable President and  
Members of the Cook County  
Board of Commissioners

Ladies and Gentlemen:

John H. Stroger, Jr., President of the Board of Commissioners of Cook County, has directed me to call a Special Meeting of the Board of Commissioners of Cook County on Wednesday, October 30, 2002, at the hour of 10:00 A.M. in the County Board Room, Room 569, County Building, 118 North Clark Street, Chicago, Illinois, at which meeting the Message of the President to the Board of Commissioners submitting the Executive Budget for Fiscal Year 2003 will be presented.

Very truly yours,

DAVID ORR, County Clerk

\* \* \* \* \*

This is to certify that a copy of the above notice was hand delivered and personally addressed to each Member of the Board of Cook County Commissioners at their home address and was deposited in the United States Mail on October 23, 2002.

DAVID ORR, County Clerk

\* \* \* \* \*

The following Legal Notice appeared in the Chicago Sun-Times Newspaper on Monday, October 28, 2002.

**LEGAL NOTICE**

John H. Stroger, Jr., President of the Board of Commissioners of Cook County, has directed me to call a Special Meeting of the Board of Commissioners of Cook County on Wednesday, October 30, 2002, at the hour of 10:00 A.M. in the County Board Room, Room 569, County Building, 118 North Clark Street, Chicago, Illinois, at which meeting the Message of the President to the Board of Cook County Commissioners submitting the Executive Budget for Fiscal Year 2003 will be presented.

Very truly yours,

DAVID ORR, Cook County and Clerk  
of the Board of the Commissioners of Cook County, Illinois

October 28, 2002

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**OFFICIAL RECORD**

President Stroger in the Chair.

**CALL TO ORDER**

At 10:00 A.M., being the hour appointed for the meeting, the President called the Board to order.

**QUORUM**

County Clerk David Orr called the roll of members and there was found to be a quorum present.

**ROLL CALL**

Present: Butler, Carr, Collins, Daley, Goslin, Hansen, Lechowicz, Maldonado, Moran, Moreno, Quigley, Schumann, Silvestri, Sims, Steele, Sutker and President Stroger—17.

Absent: None.

**BUDGET MESSAGE OF THE PRESIDENT**

**to the**

**BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS FOR THE FISCAL YEAR 2003**

October 30, 2002

To the Honorable Members of the  
Board of Commissioners of Cook County

Good morning ladies and gentleman.

Chairman Daley and Members of the Board.

I stand before you this morning to offer my 2003 Executive Budget Recommendation for the County of Cook.

This is a good news budget that holds the line on property taxes, continues to reduce our headcount and implements millions of dollars in cost savings.

I am particularly proud of this budget given these difficult economic times.

I present to you today a 2.9 billion dollar balanced budget which does not increase real estate taxes.

For the fourth consecutive year, the property tax levy will remain constant at seven hundred, twenty million dollars.

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I made a commitment when I was first elected to reduce the reliance on property taxes to fund our operations and I have continued to fulfill that promise.

In 1995, property taxes represented 32 percent of our revenues. With the passage of this budget, that reliance is further reduced to 25 percent.

That means only twenty-five cents of every dollar collected comes from property taxes.

We have continued to reduce the tax rate. In 1995, the County's tax rate was ninety-nine cents per one hundred dollars of Equalized Assessed Valuation.

Right now, that rate is at seventy-five cents and is expected to drop below seventy cents when the 2002 rates are finalized - a reduction of nearly 30% since I took office.

This represents real savings for real taxpayers.

This administration is doing its part to make the county an affordable place to live and work.

And this has been recognized by the rating agencies who collectively have given the County six bond rating upgrades since 1998.

We now hold Double A ratings by all three major rating agencies. These ratings are a result of our conservative fiscal approach which is quite simple - don't spend what you don't have.

My strategy remains to contain growth where possible and practical.

This 2.9 billion dollar budget represents a 4.6 percent increase over last year, largely due to rising health care costs for employees and obligations under collective bargaining agreements.

Health care benefit costs are rising nationally between 13 and 17 percent annually. We are not immune to that trend as our premiums are expected to rise 17.5 million dollars next year.

That is why we are aggressively pursuing the joint purchasing of health care benefits in partnership with the City of Chicago and other local governments.

The 2003 budget contemplates fair wage increases at levels the taxpayers can afford. For every one percent increase in wages, the County needs to generate an additional thirteen million dollars.

To do more would mean increased real estate taxes or lay offs. I favor neither of these alternatives at this time.

On the revenue side of the budget, significant growth is expected in patient revenues through the intergovernmental transfer agreement.

We have commitments based on our aggressive negotiations with federal and state regulators for an additional 88 million dollars in reimbursements next year.

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These revenues are vital to our operation. In 1995, 55 percent of our health care operations were funded by patient revenues.

Through ongoing efforts to seek reimbursements more in line with our costs; patient revenues will exceed 540 million dollars in 2003, representing 69 percent of the cost of our health care system.

This further exemplifies my commitment to reduce the reliance on property owners to fund operations.

Based on the current economy, we expect all other revenues to grow slightly in 2003.

This year, the state legislature authorized higher court fees to bring court revenues closer to the cost of operating the largest unified court system in the nation.

This is the first time in ten years we have raised these fees which will generate an additional ten million dollars in revenue next year.

These and other revenue sources have allowed us to continue to provide the level of service the public demands without additional burdens on tax payers.

Again, real savings for real tax payers.

In light of the economy last year, our revenue estimates were conservative and with the year coming to a close, I am pleased to say, they were also right on target.

We kept our expenses in check, reviewing them monthly and instituting management strategies like the hiring freeze to ensure that we did not exceed available revenues.

Revenues help pay for the costs of providing service, but I made a promise to find ways to reduce costs.

I followed through on my commitment to support an Early Retirement Incentive and that became a reality this year.

More than thirty-six hundred employees are eligible and as of today, more than one thousand have declared their intention to retire.

This budget reflects an estimated seven million dollars in savings based on returning these positions to entry level pay.

The general fund budget reflects more than 19 million dollars in savings resulting from the elimination of 385 full-time equivalents, mainly from the continued downsizing of the hospital.

I am pleased to report that this budget continues to implement a number of the cost saving opportunities contained in the CORT report as well as new ideas generated by our ongoing review of operations.

We conducted utility audits to identify potential areas of savings and revenue recovery. To date, we have received more than three million dollars in refunds and credits on telecommunications services.



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Earlier this year, we saw an opportunity to lock in the cost of our natural gas purchases for the coming year. Based on our efforts, this budget assumes a savings of a half million dollars next year.

This comes at a time when gas suppliers have announced 25 percent price increases for the coming year.

Another recommendation in the CORT report that we accomplished this year was the consolidation of our third district highway facility into other districts.

This action will result in more efficient use of manpower and more effective delivery of services.

As promised, we will eliminate the duplication of services where possible. During 2003, the Department of Public Health will realize significant savings as a result of the consolidation of birth and death certificates under the County Clerk's Office.

The 2003 budget increases public safety funding by 4.4 percent.

We have invested significant dollars over the past decade to address crime, but we must not be complacent, especially in these economic times.

We must continue to develop programs to keep our children from committing that first offense, which typically leads to a cycle of crime and inevitably lands our young people in jail.

It is not only the right thing to do for our society but it saves our tax payers significant dollars down the road.

In conjunction with the United States Department of Justice, we created the BADGE program. BADGE stands for Balanced Approach to Drug and Gang Elimination.

This program has resulted in more than 10 million dollars to suburban police departments for the development of crime prevention programs designed by front line officers.

The families of more than 90,000 youth have benefited from this program. And while federal funding is being threatened, I am hopeful that our leaders in Washington will see its value.

I am pleased to announce that next year we plan to distribute nearly five million dollars in BADGE grants to suburban law enforcement agencies, non-profits and other government agencies.

Through the Chief Judge's Office, we are now placing minors needing mental health services in local treatment centers rather than shipping them to centers throughout the United States.

This change not only saves money but keeps children closer to home providing a more holistic approach to treating not just the child but the entire family.

The provision of health care remains one of our top priorities and represents 39 percent of this budget.

We are weeks from the opening the new Stroger Hospital of Cook County, a project that is more than 50 years overdue and will finally provide our most vulnerable citizens with quality facilities the rest of us take for granted.

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This project was budgeted nearly ten years ago and despite what our critics say will come in on time and on budget with significant savings both now and in the future.

The hospital has continued to reduce staffing in anticipation of the opening of the new hospital. In 1994, Stroger Hospital of Cook County employed more than 6,100 people.

With the approval of this budget, that number is reduced to 4,465, a decrease of more than sixteen hundred positions.

These reductions translate to more than four hundred million dollars in savings over five years.

Additionally, we will not need to spend an estimated three hundred million dollars on capital maintenance to simply keep the old structure standing and to meet accreditation standards.

And equally important, the new Stroger Hospital of Cook County will have the same state-of-the-art equipment as Northwestern or the University of Chicago and will provide our patients with access to the same services available at private institutions.

The changing patient profile at Oak Forest Hospital of Cook County should serve as a constant reminder of the continued need for violence prevention programs as well as a reminder of the County's ability to meet the present day demands in health care.

Where Oak Forest Hospital of Cook County formerly treated the elderly and chronically ill, an ever increasing number of victims of violence, primarily gun shot victims, now rely on Oak Forest for medical care and rehabilitation.

The Cook County Department of Public Health continues its status as a nationally recognized health department. Several new health issues taxed this department in 2002.

The arrival of the first human cases of West Nile Virus provided yet another opportunity for public health to shine.

Working with the state and federal government, our Department of Public Health stepped in to help secure funds for mosquito abatement services, a responsibility not directly theirs.

This past year also found the Department planning for the unimaginable. The Department has prepared for the very real threats of bioterrorism and mass infections by developing distribution channels for medications, information dissemination practices and medical protocols.

Additionally, Stroger Hospital of Cook County has been designated by the federal government as a bioterrorism treatment site.

Our public safety and public health services are vital but we must not lose sight of the other important services we provide.

This budget continues to fund highway improvements throughout our more than 900 square miles of jurisdiction.

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Over the next year, we will spend one hundred million dollars on improving our 574 miles of paved highways.

This represents the largest and most ambitious schedule since our involvement in the construction of our expressways.

Included in next year's budget are plans to reconstruct Vollmer Road in the south suburbs and Bode Road in the northwestern suburbs. Resurfacing projects along Western and Kedzie Avenues are also planned.

In 2003, we will provide almost 20 million dollars to our partners in the suburbs for improvements such as fire trucks, senior centers and low income and senior housing. These programs are critical to the long term health of this county and the communities we serve.

In this economy, it is more important than ever that we step up our efforts in retaining and recruiting companies in Cook County.

Our tax incentives, business center and no cash bid programs are designed to get properties back on the tax rolls and create or retain jobs in our region.

Through these and other programs, almost 3,000 new or retained businesses were provided real incentives that businesses utilized in 2002.

We have budgeted 172 million in capital funds for improvements to our court system, technology and facilities.

We must continue to build our technology systems, maintain and update them at current standards and provide our residents with new or improved levels of service.

I am pleased to announce that next year, we will expand the capacity of our Wide Area Network (WAN) which allows not only our internal agencies access to our secure system, but provides municipal police departments access to the electronic booking system that we house.

The WAN also houses our clinical information system and when completed, will link all of our Bureau of Health facilities.

This will provide a secure access site for electronic medical records.

New in this year's technology budget is funding toward the development of a business-disaster recovery program.

This will provide the protection of mission critical applications and data in the event of a disaster.

This budget provides capital funds for the development of a new Domestic Violence Courthouse at 612 S. Clinton, a project that will provide victims with an appropriate and sensitive setting to conduct their legal matters.

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I am pleased to report that we now hold title to both the building and the adjacent parking lot and are on schedule with the design of this new facility.

I stand before you proud of what we have accomplished this year and excited for the opportunities that lie ahead.

Together, and with a team of talented professionals, the Cook County Board of Commissioners has continued to make Cook County Government stronger, more efficient, more effective and yes, even smaller.

County Government has a noble and important mission. We take that mission seriously.

And while public health and public safety are at the forefront of what we do, we must not lose sight of the role we play in economic development, road construction and improvement, elections and social services.

Our accomplishments, although often go untold, are many.

Our commitment to public service honorable.

We have much to be proud of as we look back on 2002 and much to look forward to in 2003.

I ask for your continued support in the passage of this 2.9 billion budget so that we, the second largest county in the United States, may continue the important work on behalf of our more than five million residents.

Thank you and God Bless.

JOHN H. STROGER, JR., President

\* \* \* \* \*

The Message of the President to the Board of Cook County Commissioners was given by President Stroger.

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President Stroger then submitted the Executive Budget to the Board of Commissioners for the Fiscal Year 2003, for referral to the Committee on Finance.

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Commissioner Daley, seconded by Commissioner Carr, moved that the President's Executive Budget be referred to the Committee on Finance. **The motion carried unanimously.**

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**ADJOURNMENT**

Commissioner Daley, seconded by Commissioner Carr, moved that the Special Meeting do now adjourn.

The motion prevailed and the Special Meeting stood adjourned.

The next regular County Board Meeting is scheduled by law, for Thursday, November 7, 2002.

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County Clerk